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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 DAR ES SALAAM 002322

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SUBJECT: A/S FRAZER'S DECEMBER 21, 2005, CONVERSATION WITH ZANZIBAR PRESIDENT AMANI KARUME

Classified By: Political Officer Maureen B. Latour for reason 1.4(d)

1. (U) December 21, 2005; 3:15pm; Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

2. (U) Participants:

U.S.

Assistant Secretary Jendayi Frazer
Dr. Cindy Courville
Amb. Michael Retzer
DCM Purnell Delly
PolCouns Mary Johnson
Poloff Maureen B. Latour

Tanzania

Amani Karume, President of Zanzibar
Omari Mgenga, Special Assistant to Jendayi Kikwete as Foreign Minister
Notetaker for President Karume

3. SUMMARY: In a December 21 meeting with AF Assistant Secretary Frazer, President Karume welcomed the recent

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unveiling of the President's Malaria Initiative on Zanzibar, pointed to what he said were fair and largely violence-free elections on Zanzibar, but intimated that there may be some elements on the isles (i.e., the opposition Civil United Front) that may fall prey to extremism and see advantage to violence in the future. The Assistant Secretary raised polarization on Zanzibar between the CUF stronghold of Pemba and CCM stronghold Unguja, asking Karume how this division could be bridged and reconciliation achieved with CUF opposition leader Hamad and his party. She emphasized that the best way to deal with the risk of extremism, as President Bush had underlined in his second inaugural address, was democratization, opening genuine political space for opponents and, in the case of Zanzibar, conducting an electoral process that all parties could have confidence in. End Summary.

4. (C) On December 21, the Presidential Delegation to the inauguration of the new president of Tanzania met with Amani Karume, President of Zanzibar at the State House. The Delegation was comprised of Assistant Secretary of State Jendayi Frazer, Special Assistant to the President Dr. Cindy Courville, Ambassador Retzer and DCM Delly.

Health: Eradicating malaria

5. (C) Karume expressed his gratitude for support received from the USG, especially for education and for rapidly expanding health programs, including U.S. assistance on HIV/AIDS and malaria. Karume stated the government's goal is to eradicate malaria completely on Zanzibar and believes it is possible if they work hard and fully implement the President's Malaria Initiative. Karume recalled a similar project in the 1970's in which the USG spent \$10 million and sent US experts to Zanzibar for three to four years. Karume believes if this project had continued, with adequate support from the GOT, malaria would have been eradicated on the isles. A/S Frazer agreed noting that the program was another sign of President Bush's commitment to Africa, and Dr. Courville noted its goals of building capacity and partnering with the GOT.

Political Divide: Clear but calm

6. (C) When A/S Frazer asked if the islands of Zanzibar are divided politically, Karume responded with an unqualified "yes" and described it as "not a very healthy political situation." He said it is bad to allow politics to polarize the people among racial or ethnic lines, but noted that most people who live on the Zanzibari islands are inter-related with people from both islands. While Karume said he did not believe the situation in Zanzibar was explosive, he admitted there may be some politicians who would like to see the situation unravel into violence. Karume strongly emphasized that he was President of both islands, and that "Zanzibar is Unguja and Pemba."

Reconciliation: Under way

7. (C) A/S Frazer asked how Karume planned to reconcile with opposition leaders and Ambassador Retzer asked if there

will be a Mufaka III. Karume responded that there is no need for a Mufaka III because Mufaka II was implemented and gave birth to an inter-party committee which now consists of 17 parties. He assured the U.S. delegation that these inter-party talks will continue. He also cited the eventual success of the political process which began after the violence of January 2001, when CCM and CUF "sat down, discussed issues and reached an amicable solution." Those positive political developments, Karume said, brought about free, fair and peaceful elections this year.

18. (C) Ambassador Retzer emphasized the importance of a continuing reconciliation process between Unguja and Pemba, CUF and CCM. Karume said elections on October 30 and December 14 were very peaceful and that the campaign or post-election period had little effect on tourism. He assured the delegation that Zanzibar is going to remain peaceful and declared that to be the responsibility of his government.

Pemba: Small island, big role

19. (C) Karume declared CCM support on Pemba & the nucleus of our political integration⁸ and said CCM is going to increase its support base there. Though CUF won all the seats on Pemba, he said they will sit on the opposition bench, to criticize, scrutinize and give the government the most appropriate political challenge possible. Karume said he believed different political views enhance progress.

110. (C) When Ambassador Retzer commented that CCM on the mainland won because of the economy and the voters, desire to see economic progress continue, Karume took the opportunity to describe progress on Pemba. He described the island in 2001 as one with no electricity, running water or internet, bad roads, sporadic telecommunication services and businesses that were not doing well. Karume said that since then the government has paved many roads, installed generators that produce energy 24 hours a day at a subsidized cost, that & everywhere you go there is a primary school,⁸ and that more people enjoy clean and safe water on Pemba than on Unguja. Karume stated the government's work and progress will continue. He added that the majority of CUF top leadership do not even live on Pemba, but on Unguja or in Dar and that he has spent more time on Pemba in the last five years than did Hamad.

CUF: as seen from across the aisle

111. (C) Karume said CUF lost all its seats on the mainland because it is portrayed as a party which preaches violence, not peace. Karume said it is a shame to see a party whose leaders have lost control, describing CUF's leaders as unruly and violent, and their policy as not conducive to integration or development. Karume illustrated this by contrasting the CCM and CUF reaction to events of September 11, 2001, saying "we" were all shocked, condemned terrorism, will continue to fight terrorism, and sided with the US while the opposition in Zanzibar and Dar launched huge demonstrations, praising "outlaws" and cheering "bad acts." A/S Frazer said a key part of the solution to dealing with extremism is providing greater political space and implementing a political process, including elections, in which all sides have confidence, noting that President Bush had emphasized this in his inauguration speech.

Elections: looking ahead

112. (C) A/S Frazer told Karume the USG will work with him to develop Zanzibar and with ZEC to improve the quality of elections. Karume then renewed a request he made more than a year ago to then-Charge Michael Owen for a biometric engine. Karume said the engine would cost about one million USD, is manufactured in the US and could increase voter registration by three hundred to four hundred percent. The engine could be used to create voter cards for the Zanzibar ID card program, newly-instituted for all who live on Zanzibar. Karume believes that the use of identity cards in the election process will reduce complaints, but commented that Hamad said there was no need for this system.

113. (C) A/S Frazer emphasized the key to elections is transparency and told Karume the USG is looking for ways to start working now to help ZEC with capacity. Karume welcomed this idea (but without evident enthusiasm), saying it should be done by both NEC and ZEC and needs to be discussed with the electoral commissions. Karume advised the delegation never to expect election results in Africa to be accepted as it is the nature of the opposition to complain.

Pemba: A cautionary tale

114. (C) When A/S Frazer mentioned the Delegation's plans to travel to Pemba for a cultural event and to meet with clerics the next day, December 22, Karume advised the delegation not to go as they may be seen as aligning with the clerics, some of whom are highly politicized. Karume said he would be more comfortable with the delegation going to Unguja rather than Pemba.

15. (C) Ambassador Retzer reminded Karume that A/S Frazer had a similar dialogue with clerics on Unguja during her October visit and described both trips as part of a larger effort covering the entire Swahili coast. Dr. Courville stated the effort reaches throughout sub-Saharan Africa and is part of a global outreach to the Islamic world. Karume suggested the embassy has cultural officers for such purposes, and said it was not a proper role for a senior official like an Assistant Secretary. A/S Frazer responded that she likes to see things first-hand and would proceed with the event. Karume responded "I don,t want your embarrassment to drag down us."

16. (C) A/S Frazer reassured Karume that her message to CUF is to accept the results of the election and move on. She said that she would convey Karume,s message regarding accountability and the need to work with the government. Karume agreed that the message is positive but said they are arranging for Hamad to be sworn in as a "leader" on Pemba. He cautioned A/S Frazer to "be careful they don,t drag you in" as it could send bad signals and not to get mixed up with Zanzibar politics as it can be "too rough." A/S Frazer assured Karume she was capable of handling the situation.

17. (C) Comment: Karume's distrust of U.S. intentions in Pemba was evident both in his speech and demeanor as he fidgeted with his hands and appeared uncomfortable when the trip was discussed. His message seemed equally divided between his desire to keep USG representatives away from CUF leaders and the CUF stronghold of Pemba and his desire to be portrayed as a friend of the U.S., concluding that his message to President Bush is to support your friends and that "we were, are now, and will continue to be your friends".

18. (U) A/S Frazer has cleared this cable.
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